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In the claims:

Cancel claims 1 -16 and enter new claims 17-29, as follows. All claims are indicated in the listing with their current status.

17. (New) A dedicated electronic document answering machine, separate from a personal computer, comprising:

a port for connecting to the Internet network;

a system for connecting to the Internet on request by the user via the port;

and

an indicator for availability of documents;

wherein the answering machine on users request connects to the Internet, and makes at least a portion of an electronic document available to the user as audible voice.

18. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 wherein the audible voice system comprises a speaker.

19. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 wherein the electronic documents can be downloaded.

20. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 19 wherein the electronic documents include one or more e-mails.

21. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 additionally comprising a communication port for connecting to a host personal computer (PC), wherein the electronic document answering machine is enabled to communicate downloaded documents to the PC for processing.

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22. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 21 wherein the answering machine is responsive to commands from the PC to connect to the Internet and download documents.

23. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 22 wherein the answering machine is operated by the PC and has no separate CPU.

24. (New) The electronic document answering machine as in claim 17 wherein, in connecting to the Internet, the answering machine connects to an Internet mail server.

25. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 further comprising an alert apparatus for alerting a user to the availability of an electronic document.

26. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 further comprising an input apparatus for initiating the process of converting a document to audible voice.

27. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 wherein the alert apparatus comprises one or both an audible alert and a visual alert.

28. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 wherein the alert apparatus comprises an LED that lights for availability of one or more documents.

29. (New) The electronic document answering machine of claim 26 wherein the

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alert is an LED coupled with a pushbutton as the input apparatus.